

'Diverse' festivities'



A culturally diverse workforce often tends to bring out a fresh perspective to the table. Here's why such a workforce stands apart from the rest.

Though cultural diversity is an important aspect, it is often ignored at the workplace level. Every company is a mesh of employees coming from different religions, locations, communities and cultures. The more the variety, the more challenging it is for the employees to adjust with each other; but once they get past these differences, this cultural diversity can prove very beneficial for the organisation and its productivity. The range of people working together can bring an all-new dimension to the creativity and decision-making process in the company.

Jayan Narayanan, AVP and head, corporate marketing and communications, CSS Corp, tells us the benefits that an organisation can derive from its cultural diversity, "A culturally diverse workforce implies that we meet people with vivid experiences, ways of articulation and communication. This makes interaction within the organisation more diverse, thus making the shop floors more productive and buzzing with activity. In terms of productivity, this diversity helps tackle difficult situations and makes ideation more diverse. Employees tend to automatically tune themselves to be more diplomatic while communicating, which in turn, helps in improving client interactions to a large extent."

However, a diverse workforce poses many challenges for the company as well that must be tackled with care. Ulhas Chandratre, AVP, HR, Sanghvi Movers Ltd, elaborates, "Sometimes, cultural diversity among employees leads to communication gaps and consequently, a problem in understanding and team-work. Problems in co-ordination between the head-office team and on-site employees can sometimes lead to issues. We also face the problem of absenteeism during regional festivals. Cultural prejudices and shocks are other major hurdles."

So how can a company make its workforce more diverse? Dinesh Rai, associate VP - HR, Mindteck, answers, "An organisation should sensitise its workforce to respect cultural differences by providing diversity training. Accommodating cultural and festive holidays and flexible schedules are some more ways an organisation can adopt to make its workforce diverse."

Whatever the route, cultural diversity among employees can go a long way in increasing the innovation levels and improving organisational productivity.

- Palak Bhatia

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